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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NEW DELHI 003054

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/02/2018

TAGS: IN KDEM KISL PGOV PHUM PINR PK PREL PTER

SUBJECT: PM SINGH URGES MCCAIN CODEL TO DELIVER TOUGH
MESSAGE TO PAKISTAN

REF: NEW DELHI 3037 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador David C. Mulford for Reasons 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C) Summary: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh told Senators McCain, Lieberman, Graham, and the Ambassador in a December 2 meeting that the November terrorist attacks in Mumbai were of an unprecedented level of sophistication, clearly launched by LeT from Pakistani soil, with at least the knowledge of elements of the Pakistan military/ISI. The Prime Minister said the mood of the Indian public and politicians was the angriest he had ever seen in his political career and he urged strong U.S. pressure on Pakistan to take strong and swift action against LeT and all those involved in the Mumbai atrocities. The Prime Minister stressed that any attempts to link Kashmir in any way with terrorism was completely unacceptable to India. Senator McCain and the Codel said that they would deliver a strong message to Pakistan of the importance of moving against those responsible for the Mumbai attacks, that the U.S. was one hundred percent with India, and that the U.S. fully agreed there could be no linkage between Kashmir and terrorism. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Senate Armed Services Committee Ranking Member John McCain, accompanied by Committee Members Joseph Lieberman, Lindsey Graham, and The Ambassador, met December 2 with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his National Security Advisor, M.K. Narayanan. Senator McCain expressed his and America's condolences for the great loss of life in the Mumbai attacks and offered U.S. support to track down all those involved in the attacks and any other assistance that could be helpful to India in this difficult time. He also thanked the Prime Minister for all of his tremendous political lifting in India that led to passage of the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement that will benefit both India and the world. The Prime Minister said that it was a great privilege to receive Senator McCain and his colleagues and he thanked them for the very impressive bipartisan support for the historic agreement that will strengthen even further U.S.-India relationship. Senator McCain thanked the Prime Minister for the strong support he had given Ambassador Mulford during his five years

in India; the Prime Minister responded that the Civil Nuclear Agreement would not have been completed without the Ambassador's strong leadership in the process.

Mubai Attacks Represent Quantum Leap in Threat Level to India

¶3. (C) The Prime Minister said there is an intense feeling of hurt and anger among the Indian people following the Mumbai terrorist attacks. He noted that, following the terrorist attack on the Indian Embassy in Kabul, he had two meetings with Pakistani Prime Minister Gilani and one meeting with President Zardari. He told both of them that "our information was that the ISI was involved in the attack and we asked for an investigation." India never received a response. The Prime Minister said that the Mumbai attacks represented a quantum leap in military sophistication, requiring phenomenal planning, training, and a mastermind. He added that he spoke with President Bush two days ago and Prime Minister Brown yesterday who agreed with this conclusion. The Prime Minister stressed that there is no distinction in Pakistan today between Al-Qaeda, LeT, or similar terrorist groups. All are interconnected and permitted to operate freely. The Prime Minister noted that Pakistan has been sheltering "mafia leaders" who fled there years ago after committing terrorist acts against India, despite Indian requests that they be delivered to India for trial (note: the PM is referring to Dawood Ibrahim and Maulana Azhar, behind the 1992 Mumbai attacks and hijacking of an Indian Air jet).

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Indian Public Anger Is Intense

¶4. (C) The Prime Minister stressed that there has been no help from the Pakistan Government to get control over the terrorist groups. There is no doubt that the Mumbai attacks were planned for some time, with military precision, indicating that some elements within the Pakistan military must have at least known about the operation. "This is clearly an LeT operation" and India has urged Pakistan to turn over all those involved for trial in India. The Prime Minister said that without GOP cooperation, the people's anger will increase and politicians will be held accountable.

The Prime Minister described an all parties meeting that he convened two days ago "as filled with more anger than I have ever seen in my public life." The Prime Minister urged the Codel and U.S. to pressure Pakistan to take action against the terrorist groups. He added that the international community must understand what is at stake. The world's largest democracy is under attack and the Mumbai assault cut at the very roots of Indian nationhood. Noting that the terrorists specifically asked victims whether they were Americans, British, or Jews, the Prime Minister said this was not just an attack on India but on the civilized world.

Any Linkage Between Kashmir and Terrorism Unacceptable

¶5. (C) The Prime Minister said there can be no concessions with terrorists. The terrorists operating against India were the same as those operating in Pakistan and Afghanistan. India was therefore concerned by recent interviews by some in the U.S. that gave the impression of linking the Kashmir issue to Afghanistan. The Prime Minister said this is a mistake; were Kashmir to be part of Pakistan would invite Al Qaeda into South Asia. There is no distinction between it and LeT. The Prime Minister noted that India is heavily engaged in Afghanistan and will stay the course despite its losses there; "we only ask the world to stay the course against terrorism." The Prime Minister said that the misery he had seen in the hospitals from the Mumbai attacks "haunts me and fills me with outrage."

¶6. (C) Senator Lieberman said the U.S. agrees with all that you have said; LeT and Al Queda are of the same fabric, whether regional or global in scope. Lieberman noted that he had seen some U.S. media comments linking Kashmir and terrorism, but that this was not the thinking of most people in the U.S. who see no linkage between the two. Lieberman added that all of these groups operate out of Pakistan and are a threat to the U.S., India and the world. The Prime Minister replied that the U.S. must impress upon Pakistan the need to reform its armed forces, i.e., the ISI, which is a wing of the armed forces. The message should be clear that the use of terror as a state means to an end is unacceptable.

The Prime Minister said that President Bush told him that he agreed and was sending Secretary Rice and CJCS Chairman Mullen to convey this message. The Prime Minister added that since all agree that the Mumbai terrorists came from Pakistan, then all who value pluralist societies should stand up and say "enough is enough."

Pakistani Civilian Government Unresponsive; Strong U.S. Message To GOP Critical

¶7. (C) Senator McCain said that the Mumbai attacks showed a level of sophistication and training that he had never before seen. This operation was leaps ahead of any other acts of terror to date and threatens everyone. He added that it is unacceptable for any government to allow this to happen; it

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could happen to any populous city anywhere. Senator Graham noted that Senators McCain and Lieberman were the driving forces behind the 9/11 Commission and the implementation of its recommendations, and he offered to share this experience with India. Graham asked what India thinks Pakistan will do in response to the fallout over the Mumbai attacks. The Prime Minister responded that neither President Zardari nor PM Gilani denied it when he told them that all evidence points to Karachi as the terrorists' point of origin. They promised to send over the ISI Director General to assist, but within a few hours this offer was rescinded after the armed forces intervened to say no and an ISI junior officer was offered instead. This showed that the young civilian government had not established its authority in Pakistan. The Prime Minister stressed that he was not accusing either Zardari or Gilani of complicity, but they operate in system that allows terrorism and which is incompatible with the civilized world. India has been experiencing terrorism from this system for 20 years, whereas the world only woke up and saw it after the 9/11 attacks.

¶8. (C) Senator McCain said that the U.S. is one-thousand percent behind India, and that the Codel will deliver a strong message to GOP in their upcoming meetings. He noted that President-Elect Obama has selected a good national security team and that India can expect continuity in our good relationship. The Prime Minister said that he had a good conversation with the President-Elect following the Mumbai attacks and he was confident that the U.S.-India strategic partnership would continue. The President-Elect told him that he had been consulting with President Bush over the Mumbai attacks. McCain said that the President-Elect understands there is no linkage between Kashmir and terrorism and that the Mumbai attacks were an attack on India, the U.S., and the world.

¶9. (C) Senator Lieberman said he wanted to reiterate Senator Graham's offer to share U.S. experiences following 9/11. He noted that Congress launched the 9/11 Commission as an independent, non-partisan body to investigate what went wrong and to make recommendations. Out of that came a reformed national security system that included a new Directorate of National Intelligence and a National Counter Terrorism Center "to connect all the intelligence dots", the prior lack of which was a principal factor in the 9/11 attacks. NSA Narayanan said that he has met three times with

the DNI who will be visiting India this month to discuss,
inter alia, India's plan to launch something similar to the
U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

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